Unemployment rate rises to 3.5%

Media Release

Released 15/09/2022

Source: Labour Force, Australia, August 2022

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose to 3.5 per cent in August 2022, according to data released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Lauren Ford, head of labour statistics at the ABS, said: "With employment increasing by 33,000 people and unemployment by 14,000, the unemployment rate rose 0.1 percentage points to 3.5 per cent in August, returning to the same rate as June."

The unemployment rate rose to 3.5 per cent for men (up 0.1 percentage points), and remained steady for women at 3.4 per cent in rounded terms.

The participation rate also rose, to 66.6 per cent, consistent with the increase in employment and unemployment. The participation rate is now 0.2 percentage points below the record high in June and 0.7 percentage points higher than before the pandemic.

The participation rate rose for men and women (both up 0.2 percentage points).

Employment and hours worked

Seasonally adjusted employment increased by 33,000 people (0.2 per cent) in August 2022.

With the rise in employment, the employment to population ratio increased 0.1 percentage points to 64.3 per cent.

Seasonally adjusted hours worked rose by 0.8 per cent in August 2022. This fully reversed last month’s drop in hours worked (down 0.8 per cent in July).

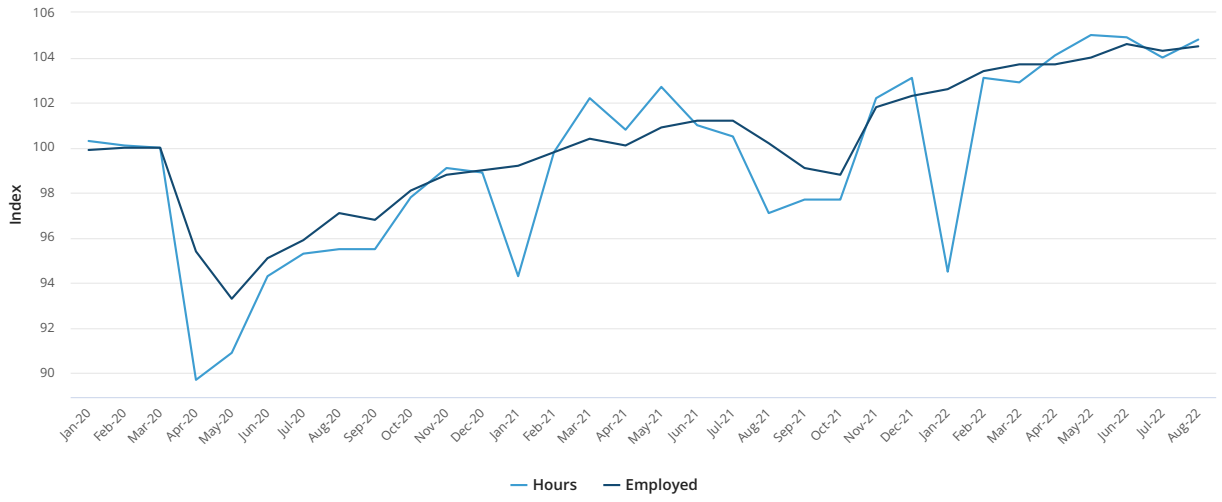
“During the pandemic, we have seen changing patterns in employment and hours worked in the months with and after school holidays.

“The August rise in employment and hours occurred after the winter school holidays and flooding events in New South Wales, where we saw more people than usual working fewer hours in July.

"COVID-19 and other illness related worker absences continued to be reflected in hours worked in August.

”The number of people working reduced hours due to being sick remained elevated in August, at around 760,000 people. This is around double the number we typically see at the end of winter," Ms Ford said.

Seasonally adjusted employment and hours worked, indexed to March 2020



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

Underemployment and underutilisation

The underemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage points to 5.9 per cent.

The underutilisation rate, which combines the unemployment and underemployment rates,

remained at 9.4 per cent.

Today's release includes additional analysis of hours worked and historical charts back to 1966.

Further information, including regional labour market information, will be available in the upcoming August 2022 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, due for release on Wednesday 21 September 2022, brought forward from the traditional Thursday release, as Thursday 22 September 2022 has been declared a National public holiday.

The ABS would like to thank Australians for their continued support in responding to our surveys during such a difficult time.

Media notes

- The ABS is planning to reinstate Trend estimates and revert to concurrent seasonal adjustment for all Labour Force series in the September 2022 Labour Force publication, to be released on 20 October 2022.
- The August survey reference period was from 31 July to 13 August 2022. The September survey reference period is from 4 September to 17 September 2022.
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